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# Economic and Social Council

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**Commission on the Status of Women**
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Item 3 of the provisional agenda*
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"**

## Statement submitted by Coordination française du lobby européen des femmes, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

* E/CN.6/2005/1.

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## Statement

**Given the following recommendations of the Beijing Platform for Action:**

*"Religion, spirituality and belief play a central role in the lives of millions of women and men... The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion is inalienable and must be universally enjoyed...However, it is acknowledged that any form of extremism may have a negative impact on women and can lead to violence and discrimination."* (Beijing Platform for Action, Article 24)

*"Governments must condemn violence against women and refrain from invoking any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination as set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women."* (Beijing Platform for Action, Article 124).

**Given the NGO recommendation at the CEE UN Regional Conference for Beijing + 5 (Geneva, January 2000):**

*"NGOs esteem that the increase of religious extremisms threatens the enjoyment, by women, of the full equality of all their human rights"*

**We reaffirm that certain practices, models and religious constraints** limit the recognition of women's full capacity, of their rights and of the **effective carrying out of parity between women and men.**

**We live in societies ruled by law, and all Member States of the United Nations having signed the International Pacts concerning Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Concerning Civil and Political Rights of 1966 accept this.**

**We urgently request that States respect these signatures and that the principles thus approved be effectively applied. These principles are universal; they are not Eastern, Western, Southern or Northern. Each citizen, woman and man, of a member State of the United Nations must enjoy full equality before the law and their rights must not be limited, even less ignored, under pretext of any religion, belief or philosophy whatsoever.**

**Based on the foregoing, the C.L.E.F. presents its recommendations on Relations between States and Religions.**

- **Governments must ensure that the messages expressed in religious discourse do not exert any influence detrimental to women on civil society.**
- **Governments will not tolerate restrictions or denials made by any religious structures whatsoever of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, signed by nearly all member States, nor of prevailing legal provisions.**
- **Governments must ensure that these same religious structures respect and recommend unrestrictedly the principles of this Declaration and the prevailing legal provisions before granting them any public or financial support.**